

CLEAN VERSION OF THE AMENDMENTS

Amendment to the Claims

In the Claims:

~~Please amend Claims 8, 9, 10, 13, 14, and 15 as follows:~~

8. (Amended) A computer-implemented method comprising:

constructing a plurality of item slot groups, each item slot group having a number of item slots, each item slot initially unfilled and able to be filled by an item;

constructing a plurality of meta item slot groups, each meta item slot group encompassing at least one item slot group and having a number of meta item slots equal to a total number of item slots of the at least one item slot group the meta item slot group encompasses, each meta item slot initially unfilled and able to be filled by an item;

allocating each of a plurality of items of a first type over the meta item slots of the meta item slot groups that are unfilled by matching characteristics of the first type of items to characteristics of the meta item slot groups, such that allocating an item to a meta item slot fills the meta item slot with the item;

allocating each of a plurality of items of a second type over both the meta item slots of the meta item slot groups that are unfilled and the item slots of the item slot groups that are unfilled by matching characteristics of the second type of items to the respective characteristics of the item slot groups and the meta item slot groups, such that allocating an item to an item slot fills the item slot with the item, and allocating an item to a meta item slot fills the meta item slot with the item; and,

for each meta item slot group, allocating each of the plurality of items of the first type that have been allocated to a meta item slot over the item slots of the at least one item slot group encompassed by that meta item slot group that are unfilled, by matching characteristics of the first type of items to characteristics of the at least one item slot group encompassed by that meta item slot group, such that allocating an item to an item slot fills the item slot with the item.

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1 9. (Amended) The method of claim 8, further comprising:

2 displaying the plurality of item slot groups as a first histogram having a plurality of
3 bars, where each bar corresponds to an item slot group and has a height corresponding to the number
4 of item slots of the item slot group, wherein the bar has an indication as to how many of the number
5 of item slots of the item slot group are filled and how many of the number of item slots of the item
6 slot group are unfilled; and,

7 displaying the plurality of meta item slot groups as a second histogram having a plurality of
8 bars, where each bar corresponds to a meta item slot group and has a height corresponding to the number
9 of meta item slots of the meta item slot group, wherein the bar has an indication as to how many of the number
10 of meta item slots of the meta item slot group are filled and how many of the number of meta item slots of the meta item slot group are unfilled.

12 10. (Amended) The method of claim 8, wherein each item comprises an ad, each item slot group
13 comprises a web site, and each meta item slot group comprises at least one web site having similar
14 characteristics, such that each item slot of the item slot group corresponds to an advertising space on the
15 web site on which an ad can be shown, and each meta item slot of the meta item slot group corresponds to
16 an advertising space on a web site of the meta item slot group on which an ad can be shown.

17 13. (Amended) A computer-implemented method comprising:

18 constructing a plurality of sub item slot groups, each sub group having a number of
19 item slots, each item slot initially unfilled and able to be filled by an item;

20 constructing a plurality of item slot groups, each group encompassing at least one sub
21 item slot group and having a number of item slots equal to a total number of item slots of the at least
22 one sub item slot group the group encompasses, each item slot initially unfilled and able to be filled
23 by an item;

24 constructing a plurality of meta item slot groups, each meta group encompassing at
25 least one item slot group and having a number of meta item slots equal to a total number of item slots
26 of the at least one item slot group the meta group encompasses, each item slot initially unfilled and
27 able to be filled by an item;

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allocating a plurality of items of a first type over the meta item slots of the meta item slot groups that are unfilled by matching characteristics of the first type of items to characteristics of the meta item slot groups, such that allocating an item to a meta item slot fills the meta item slot with the item;

allocating each of a plurality of items of a second type over the meta item slots of the meta item slot groups that are unfilled, the item slots of the item slot groups that are unfilled, and the item slots of the sub item slot groups that are unfilled, by matching characteristics of the second type of items to respective characteristics of the meta item slot groups, of the item slot groups, and of the sub item slot groups, such that allocating an item to an item slot fills the item slot with the item, and allocating an item to a meta item slot fills the meta item slot with the item; and,

for each meta item slot group, allocating each of the plurality of items of the first type that have been allocated to a meta item slot in that meta item slot group over the item slots of the at least one item slot group encompassed by that meta item slot group that are unfilled and the item slots of the sub item slot groups encompassed by that meta item slot group that are unfilled, by matching characteristics of the first type of items to respective characteristics of the item slot groups and the sub item slot groups encompassed by that meta item slot group, such that allocating an item to an item slot fills the item slot with the item.

14. (Amended) The method of claim 13, further comprising the steps of:

displaying the plurality of item slot groups as a first histogram having a plurality of sub-bars organized into a plurality of bars, where each sub-bar corresponds to a sub item slot group and has a height corresponding to the number of item slots of the sub item slot group, wherein the sub-bar has an indication as to how many of the number of item slots of the sub item slot group are filled and how many of the number of item slots of the sub item slot group are unfilled; and,

displaying the plurality of meta item slot groups as a second histogram having a plurality of bars, where each bar corresponds to a meta item slot group and has a height corresponding to the number of meta item slots of the meta item slot group, wherein the bar has an indication as to how many of the number of meta item slots of the meta item slot group are filled and how many of the number of meta item slots of the meta item slot group are unfilled.

15. (Amended) The method of claim 13, wherein each item comprises an ad, each item slot group comprises a web site, each sub item slot group comprises a viewer type of web site, and each

1 meta item slot group comprises at least one web site having similar characteristics, such that each
2 item slot of the sub item slot group corresponds to an advertising space on the web site on which an
3 ad can be shown to a particular viewer type, each item slot of the item slot group corresponds to an
4 advertising space on the web site on which an ad can be shown, and each meta item slot of the meta
5 item slot group corresponds to an advertising space on a web site of the meta item slot group on
6 which an ad can be shown.

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